

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows. The claims are in the format as required by 35 C.F.R. § 1.121.

Cancel claims 1-5.

6. (Currently amended) ~~The A method of claim 1, further searching for a plurality of information objects~~ comprising:

receiving a first query;

automatically determining an association score between each keyword within the first query and each keyword within the a second query based at least in part upon their positions within the a hierarchy of keywords associated with the plurality information objects;

automatically expanding a scope of a search from the first query to the second query;

searching a database using the second query;

finding a first identifier for a first information object that corresponds to the second query, wherein the first information object is part of the plurality of information objects; and

calculating a first relevance score for the first information object, wherein:

at least one first relevancy rating is obtained for the first information object;

the first relevance score includes a first sum divided by a number of keywords within the second query;

the first sum includes a first summation of first products; and

for each keyword within the second query, its first product includes a corresponding first association score and a corresponding first relevance rating.

Cancel claims 7-17.

18. (Currently amended) The A data processing system readable medium having code embodied therein, the code including instructions executable by a data processing system, wherein the instructions are configured to cause the data processing system to perform a method of claim 14 searching for a plurality of information objects, wherein the method further comprises:

receiving a first signal that includes or is used to form a first query;

determining an association score between each keyword within the first query and each keyword within the a second query based at least in part upon their positions within the a hierarchy of keywords associated with the plurality of information objects;

expanding a scope of a search from the first query to a second query;

searching a database using the second query;

finding a first identifier for a first information object that corresponds to the second query, wherein the first information object is part of the plurality of information objects; wherein:

the database comprises the plurality of information objects including the first information object and a plurality of keywords; wherein

each information object within the plurality of information objects has at least

one related keyword from the plurality of keywords; and wherein

the hierarchy defines a relationship among keywords lying at different levels within the hierarchy; and

calculating a first relevance score for the first information object, wherein:

at least one first relevancy rating is obtained for the first information object;

the first relevance score includes a first sum divided by a number of keywords within the second query;

the first sum includes a first summation of first products; and

for each keyword within the second query, its first product includes a corresponding first association score and a corresponding first relevance rating.

Cancel claims 19-24.

25. (Currently amended) ~~The~~ A data processing system-implemented method of claim 7 formulating a query, further comprising:

receiving a first signal that includes or is used to form a first query having a first keyword;

determining an association score between each keyword within the first query and each keyword within ~~the~~ a second query based at least in part upon their positions within ~~the~~ a keyword hierarchy associated with a plurality of information objects;

automatically expanding a scope of a search from the first query to the second query; wherein

the second query includes the first keyword and a second keyword that is not present within the first query; and

calculating a first relevance score for the first information object, wherein:

at least one first relevancy rating is obtained for the first information object;

the first relevance score includes a first sum divided by a number of keywords within the second query;

the first sum includes a first summation of first products; and

for each keyword within the second query, its first product includes a corresponding first association score and a corresponding first relevance rating.

26. (Currently amended) ~~The~~ A data processing system readable medium having code embodied therein, the code including instructions executable by a data processing system, wherein the instructions are configured to cause the data processing system to perform a method of claim 19 formulating a query, wherein the method further comprises:

receiving a first signal that includes or is used to form a first query having a first keyword;

determining an association score between each keyword within the first query and each keyword within ~~the~~a second query based at least in part upon their positions within ~~the~~a hierarchy of keywords associated with a plurality of information objects;

automatically expanding a scope of a search from the first query to a second query based on the positions of the first keyword and a second keyword in a hierarchy, wherein the second query includes the first keyword and the second keyword that is not present within the first query; and

calculating a first relevance score for the first information object, wherein:

at least one first relevancy rating is obtained for the first information object;

the first relevance score includes a first sum divided by a number of keywords within the second query;

the first sum includes a first summation of first products; and

for each keyword within the second query, its first product includes a corresponding first association score and a corresponding first relevance rating.